

QUERIES & ANSWERS.

THE FORMATION OF PATRICK COUNTY, THIS STATE.

THE TURKEY ISLAND ROUSE.

The Inscription on Jefferson's Tombstone—General Hugh Mercer—Colonel Wyatt M. Elliott—Former Doctors in Richmond—Etc.

To the Editor of the Dispatch:
Please give me the name of the book where the story of "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" can be found.
C. P. D.
Petersburg, Va.

"Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" is the name of it.

The Transvaal Affair.

To the Editor of the Dispatch:

Please give me the date of the Transvaal affair, occurring between the Dutch Boers and the English, in which Dr. Janison was connected, to oblige you truly,
A. SUBSCRIBER.

December, 1855.

Killing a Cat.

To the Editor of the Dispatch:

Will you please state in your Query column if there is any law against killing a cat in your own yard, or what is the penalty? Answer as soon as possible.
Richmond, Va. A. SUBSCRIBER.

Provided that firearms are not used, we know of no law against it.

Colonel Wyatt M. Elliott.

To the Editor of the Dispatch:

Not long since I saw in the Dispatch an account of the death of Colonel Wyatt M. Elliott, which stated that he was the colonel of the Fifteenth Virginia Battalion, which is a mistake.

He was colonel of the Twenty-fifth Battalion, which was a member of Company C, 1st and I do not think it ever had any other colonel.
A. A. MOORE.

Present to a Lady.

To the Editor of the Dispatch:

Will you please answer the question below in next Sunday's Dispatch?

Would it be improper for a young lady to accept from a young man to whom she is not engaged, as a birth gift, a ring set with her birth-stone?

Yours truly,
Fredericksburg, Va. READER.

There are exceptions to all rules, but as a rule, it is improper for a young lady to accept any present of value from a gentleman.

Jefferson's Epitaph.

To the Editor of the Dispatch:

Will you please answer in your Sunday Query column why the words, "was buried here," instead of "is buried here," are inscribed upon Thomas Jefferson's tombstone at Monticello, Va.? If his remains are not there, then where are they? Please answer and oblige.

Richmond, Va. A. SUBSCRIBER.

The inscription upon the tomb was prepared by Jefferson's own hand. The use of "was" in this connection is not uncommon. It seems to look forward to a time when the body shall have mingled with the dust.

The Old Doctors.

To the Editor of the Dispatch:

While Mr. T. Robert Baker is telling us about the old doctors of Richmond, could he not say something also about the old doctors—McCaw, Watson, Nelson, Clark, Cabell, Cullen, Cunningham, Carrington, Deane, Patterson, Hunt, Hahn, Johnson, Little, Page, Tucker, Johnson, Gibson, Warner, Carmichael, Wellford, Munford, Mayo, Keenon, Coleman, Skelton, Deane, Brown, Drew, Bolton, Fairfax, Sneed, Lyons, Thomas, Wortham, Pico, Tuff, McGill, Crenshaw, Harris, Gwathmey, Mills, Burwell, Rawlings, and the rest?

T. H. E.

We should be glad to hear from Mr. Baker on the subject suggested.

A Preacher's Slips.

To the Editor of the Dispatch:

While perusing the common conversation, it is not uncommon to hear a preacher to use such expressions as "Whom are you looking to?" in his discourse? Would it not be better to put the proposition in the beginning of the sentence?

2. It is considered inelegant for a preacher to use such contractions as "don't" for "do not" and "won't" for "will not." In preaching?

LOCAL PREACHER.

Oak Grove Church, Va., May 15, 1897.

1. Yes.

2. Much depends upon the connection in which the words are used. Something, too, depends upon the character of the congregation addressed. The average congregation may be reached better by unaffected speech than by a brilliant exhibition of pedantry.

General Alexander Brown.

To the Editor of the Dispatch:

My grandfather, General Alexander Brown, was a worthy old soldier of the Revolution, and at the time of his death, April 21, 1891. He was too old to enter the active service of the Confederacy, but I understand that he was a member of some of the military organizations of Richmond, especially at the time of the "Pawnee" scare, etc. I am anxious to have definite information in reference to his acts during the war, and I shall be very grateful if the "Query Column" of the Dispatch will put me in communication with some one willing and able to gratify me.

ALEXANDER BROWN.

Norwood P. O., Nelson county, Va.

The Dispatch would be glad to serve its distinguished friend. We should be pleased to receive the address of any one who can furnish the desired information.

Turkey Island House.

To the Editor of the Dispatch:

Can you tell me in what year the original house at Turkey Island was built, and when and how destroyed? Also, whether it was of frame or brick? Also, what year it went out of the possession of the Randolph family? By so doing you will oblige.

A. CONSTANT READER.

We regret to say that we are unable to answer these questions, but we have been told that Richard Randolph in a contribution that he made to the Southern Literary Messenger (perish not recollected, it may be between 1850 and 1860), gave a very full account of the old residence. By examining the index of that magazine our correspondent may be able to get the information asked. The State Library has a file of Messengers.

Lee and Davis.

To the Editor of the Dispatch:

I have a request from Major George W. Davis, United States Army, in charge of the War Records Office. He writes: "It would seem appropriate to print in the Official History of the War the letter of General Lee to President Davis, dated August 9, 1863, wherein the General asks to be relieved from the command of the Army of Northern Virginia."

"This letter is published in Mrs. Davis' book, Volume II, page 83-85, but there is no certified copy in the possession of the War Department. The reply of Mr. Davis to General Lee was long since published in the War Records,

and I would be pleased to see that General Lee's letter is also printed, if I can have an opportunity to take a copy from the original.

You are very familiar with the literature of the war, and I have ventured to hope that it may be practicable for you to aid the department in securing an authenticated copy of the original letter."

I have to regret that I know not in whose possession the letter asked for is, and I beg, therefore, the excellent medium of your column in furtherance of the laudable desire of Major Davis.

Faithfully yours, R. A. BROCK.

Secretary Southern Historical Society, Richmond, Va., May 18, 1897.

General Mercer.

To the Editor of the Dispatch:

The volume cited by your querist, "B. T. J.," in your issue of the 18th instant, was, very likely, once owned by General Hugh Mercer, who fell at Princeton, N. J., January 22, 1777.

General Mercer lived at Fredericksburg, Va., prior to the Revolution, and practiced medicine there.

At the sale of the medical library of the late Dr. John Dove, in this city, some years ago, I purchased several books with the autograph of General Hugh Mercer. One of them contained, also, the autograph of Dr. S. John Tennent, Sr., and John Tennent, Jr., the former of whom wrote an "Essay on the Pleurisy," which was published at Williamsburg, Va., in 1756. "It first brought to view," it has been asserted, "the virtue of the cherry root."

Charles Fenton Mercer was the son of General Hugh Mercer, who was killed at the battle of the Clouds. John Mercer was an able lawyer, and a variously accomplished man.

He was the compiler of that compendium of the laws of Virginia known as "Mercer's Abridgment," Williamsburg, Va., 1827; Glasgow, Scotland, 1798. It is known that he and General Hugh Mercer were related.

A fac simile of the autograph of General Hugh Mercer is given in "Lossing's Pictorial History of the Revolution," Volume II, page 65. R. A. B.

Richmond, Va., May 17, 1897.

To the Editor of the Dispatch:

I can supply part of the information "T. J." asked for in last Sunday's issue.

1. General Hugh Mercer lived in Fredericksburg, Va. His home was, and is now, called the "Old Sentry-Box," and is in a good state of preservation to this day.

2. Charles Fenton Mercer was not his son.

3. I can't tell him where he can get an autograph, but, possibly, he might find one among the old records in the court-house at Fredericksburg, Va. I have two or three small copies of what is said to be an original picture, with autograph. I can give "B. T. J." one for comparison if desired.

Respectfully, R. P. MERCER.

Little Feet.

To the Editor of the Dispatch:

The portion of this poem copied in the Dispatch a week or so ago from the Philadelphia Press does not, I think, do justice to the poem or its author. It was written by Mrs. Elizabeth Akers Allen, who wrote under the name of Florence Percy, and formerly lived in Chester county, Va. It was given me by the late Dr. H. Chandler, who I understand, copied from the original manuscript which had been given him.

J. M. S.

Two little feet, so small that may be
In one caressing hand;
Two tender feet upon the untrodden borders
Of life's mysterious land.

Dimpled and soft and pink as peach-tree blossoms
In April's fragrant days,
How can they walk among the briery tangles
Edging the world's rough ways?

These white, rose feet, along the doubtful future,
Must find a woman's hand;
Alas! since woman has the heaviest burden,
And walks the hardest road.

Love for a time will make the path before them
All dimly, smooth, and fair;
Will call away the haramies, letting only
The roses blossom there.

But when a mother's watchful eye is
Away from sight of men,
How can those dear feet be left without her
guiding.

Who will direct them then?
How will they be betrayed, deluded,
Poor little untaught feet?
Into what dreary mazes will they wander,
What dangers will they meet?

Will they go stumbling blindly in the darkness
Of sorrow's upland shade,
Or find the peaceful slopes of peace and beauty,
Whose sunlight never fades?

Will they go climbing up ambition's summit,
In the common nameless vale;
Or, in some world above securely
sheltered,
Walk side by side with love?

Some feet there are who walk this world
unwounded,
And find but pleasant ways;
Some hearts there are to which this
world is only
A round of happy days.

But they are few. Far more there are
who wander
Without hope or friend,
Who find their pathway filled with pains
and losses,
And long to reach the end.

How shall it be with her, the tender
stranger,
Fair-faced and gentle-eyed,
Before she has learned to feel the world's
rude highway
Stretches far and wide?

But who may read the future for our
little feet?
We crave all blessings sweet,
And pray that He who feeds the crying
raven
Will guide the baby's feet.

Formation of Patrick County.

To the Editor of the Dispatch:

In your column of "Queries and Answers" I notice a query from "C. P. W. of Charity, Va." in relation to the formation of Patrick county. If you will pardon my intrusion, I would be glad to give a little further information that you give in your answer, and in doing so I will retrograde for a few years. The county of Henry was formed from Patrick and Henry counties in 1793, and embraced the counties of Henry, Patrick, and that part of Franklin lying between the Henry line and the top of Cheatmount Mountain in Franklin county.

The county seat of Henry county was at that date located at Mayo Forge (in the present county of Patrick). In 1794 Franklin county was formed from Henry and Bedford counties, and the northern line of Henry county, as it now exists, was established.

In 1791 the county of Patrick was formed from Henry county, and the county seat of Patrick was located at its present site, and was removed from Mayo Forge to a point on Quaintance river, on the farm of the late E. M. Redd, about one mile west of the present residence of Hon. John R. Brown, and a few years later the county seat was removed from that point to its present site (Martinsville).

About 1850, when the late Hon. John T. Woodfin resided in the Henry county, a House of Delegates to the General Assembly, was, by act of the General Assembly, ceded back to Henry, and it now contains what is known as "New Henry."

embracing that part of Henry county lying west of "Scott's Tan-Yard," a direct line north from the New York line to the Franklin county, Va. line. Very respectfully,
Newport News, Va. TIDEWATER.

How to Test a Diamond.

(Atlanta Constitution.)

As there is no jeweler in this place, we would like to find some good method for testing the genuineness of diamonds. Can you give us one? ENQUIRE.

Smyrna, Ga., May 13th.

One of the easiest and most trustworthy modes of determining whether a supposed diamond is genuine or false is as follows: Pierce a hole in a card with a needle or pin, and then look at it, using the stone as a lens. If the supposed diamond is genuine you will see but one hole; if false, two will appear. With an imitation stone you may also see the lines on the skin of your finger, with the true gem you cannot.

J. January 12, 1777.

Notice to Correspondents.

No notice will be taken of anonymous communications.

In answering queries our first attention will be given to the letters of those correspondents who ask but one question each.

We cannot publish copyrighted songs and poems without the permission of the owner of the copyright.

This column is not an advertising medium. No query will receive attention the answer to which would necessitate the advertising of any person's business or wares.

Nor will any attention be given to long "strings" of questions. Every week numbers of correspondents ignore this rule of ours, and afterwards wonder why their queries are not answered.

Many queries are not answered because similar ones have been recently answered.

We cannot undertake to ascertain the value of old coins. For that information write to some dealer in them.

We cannot undertake to answer queries by mail; we can only answer them through this column.

We are frequently called upon to republish poems and songs, but we will not undertake to do so, except where the production called for has some historical or peculiar literary merit, and is not of easy access to the average reader.

Address: Query Editor, Dispatch Office, Richmond, Va.

N. B. We do not read unsigned letters.

New Books.

TOBACCO LEAF, ITS CULTURE AND CURE, MARKETING AND MANUFACTURE. A Practical Hand-Book on the Most Approved Methods of Growing, Harvesting, Curing, Packing, and Selling Tobacco; Also, of Tobacco Manufacture. By J. B. Killebrew, A. M., Ph. D., and Herbert Myrick, B. S. Profusely illustrated. New York: Orange-Judd Company, 1897. Pages 256. Purple cloth, decorated.

What great changes have taken place in Virginia in the tobacco industry, in regard to the localities of its cultivation and the places of its sale, within the recollection of some of our readers? One of them recently told us that when he was a boy his grandfather was quite a large tobacco-planter within eleven miles of Fredericksburg. He had his own coopers, who made his hogsheads, and a large central barn near his residence. The barn was framed and weather-boarded, and had a very sloping roof to make sure of keeping out the rain, and was at least equal to three good stories in height. It used to be filled up to its top with hanging tobacco, which had been taken from the scaffolds, and there were other log tobacco-houses on different parts of the plantation. The central barn was shedded on two sides for granaries and stables for the family horses, and a part of those for the farm, and there were tobacco sheds in other places. He also at that time raised cotton enough for his own uses, and had it spun, dyed, and woven on his premises. He also had his tannery, shoemakers, wheelwrights, and other trades. He also had a race-track. But in a few years he had abandoned tobacco, and had recourse to wheat, rye, oats, peas, and corn and fine orchards. Large quantities of cider were made with their distillates, to the negroes, and many barrels of good vinegar sent to market, but to his credit, he never had a still.

This grandfather had a friend, "Cousin Billy Harrison," who lived in the same place, and who was a very successful planter. He also had a race-track. But in a few years he had abandoned tobacco, and had recourse to wheat, rye, oats, peas, and corn and fine orchards. Large quantities of cider were made with their distillates, to the negroes, and many barrels of good vinegar sent to market, but to his credit, he never had a still.

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